

**Hertfordshire Bridge Association (HBA) Annual General Meeting  
Sunday 11th September 2022 @ 2:00pm. Zoom Video Meeting**

**Minutes**

In Attendance: 51 Members - Srimath Agalawatte, Jean Anderson, Arni Anidjar-Romain, David Arrighi, Sara Barnett, Sally Bennett, Nadia Button, Roy Button, David Collier, Jacqui Collier, Gary Conrad, Lesley Conrad, Tim Cooper, Geoff Cordingley, Bernard Eddleston, Margaret Eddleston, Roger Edmonds, Alan Ellis, Saroj Ellis, Sheila Evans, John Eyre, Andy Fenn, Marion Fenn, Anthony Golding, Miles Golding, Pat Henry, David Keith, Ian Kemp, Denis King, Richard Last, Fiona Littlewood, Paul Littlewood, Mike Minting, Francis Morton, Jill Mumford, Celia Oram, Derek Oram, Glen Parry, Helen Robinson, Valerie Schicker, Michael Shine, David Stimson, Beverley Teesdale, Robert Teesdale, Oliver Tiemann, Dave Tookey, Jenny Tookey, Geoff Vowles, Kay Vowles, Alan Woof, Tracey Woof.

Apologies for absence Tony As'ad, Anna Blanchard, Patricia Cahalane, Peter Cobden, David Eddleston, Jeff Green, Patrick Holden, Alan Hudson, Paul King, John Leake, Hazel Miles, Howard Morgan, Vicky Salmon, Mark Wadsworth, Geoff Lacey.

**Welcome**

Mike Minting, HBA President welcomed members to the meeting and handed over to Paul Littlewood, HBA Chairman.

Paul expressed his sadness at the nation's loss and called for a minute's silence in honour of the passing of Queen Elizabeth II.

1. Approval of Minutes of AGM on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2021 was proposed by Mike Minting, seconded by Roger Edmonds and passed unanimously.
2. Reports  
All the reports are on the website but Paul would like to highlight one element of his report which was that he wanted to give a special thanks to Robert Teesdale who has been secretary of the HBA for many years. He has done a magnificent job over the years and Paul was sure that everyone would like to join him in thanking Robert for the fantastic job he has done and for all his hard work.  
Geoff Cordingley has agreed to take over from Robert for which we are grateful.

No questions had been submitted on the reports.

3. Approval of Accounts 2021/22 and Treasurer's Report  
Oliver Tiemann said his report was self-explanatory identifying the highlights: it was a break even year; revenues are relatively constant although our UMSs were slightly lower than last year because not as many people are playing bridge; we earned money from the Green Pointed events which will go down this coming year as only one event. We still have a surplus of over £23,000 and after it had been agreed to make all Herts events free this year, we will continue this going forward.  
The accounts had been audited by Arni and approval was proposed by John Eyre, seconded by Bernard Eddleston and agreed unanimously.
4. Secretary's report. Robert Teesdale had received a letter from the charity Stand-by-Me thanking HBA for its contributions which Oliver had increased. It would be good if we could make more charitable contributions in the future. It depends on how many heats the

clubs organise and the rules allow clubs to hold as many heats as they wish.

5. TD's report. Gary Conrad was disappointed that the July F2F Green Pointed weekend at Wodson Park had to be cancelled with a couple of weeks to go. The entries were very low and the association stood to lose a substantial amount of money, so there was no alternative to the event being cancelled.  
There is an on-line event for Herts & Essex this weekend with numbers looking much more promising although more entries could be accommodated.
6. Membership report. Alan Woof pointed out that membership & bridge playing is lower because of Covid but Herts is not as badly off as many other counties: we look to be down 10-12% compared with pre-Covid although over the last few weeks, the number of members is increasing slightly. Herts has 20 stable bridge clubs and a number of clubs are starting their training classes this week so hopefully there will be more new members in the future.
7. Election of Chairman, Officers and Committee  
All officers and committee members including three new members Geoff Cordingley, Srimath Agalawatte and Ian Kemp were standing unopposed. All were approved unanimously.
8. Appointment of Auditor  
Arni Anidjar-Romain having agreed to act as auditor was approved unanimously.
9. Any Other Business

9.1 Ian Kemp is looking for team mates and is also prepared to find teammates for next week's event. In the future perhaps something could be organised via the website to allow matching pairs for team events.

#### 9.2 Face to Face Bridge

Glen Parry expressed her thanks to the committee for all its hard work and asked if there was any idea when F2F competitions might happen again. Srimath thinks there's a desire for F2F competitions but they may have to be on a smaller scale than previously to allow for less risk. There are no plans at the moment and it would be looked at in future committee meetings.

No one has any experience of a hybrid event. Technically they can be done with the two sections merged at the end. Perhaps a trial might be run for county events if people want them.

Hitchin is increasing F2F sessions but it is continuing with two on-line sessions, one on BBO and one on RealBridge to keep in contact with members who have moved away. Sheila Evans pointed out that people who might otherwise give up playing bridge because of health issues or age are able to carry on playing on-line when previously they would have given up.

Andy Fenn thinks we should not see the situation as F2F against on-line but there is the opportunity to use both. Perhaps smaller clubs could join together to offer both F2F and on-line. From a county match point of view, he does not miss long journeys to County matches and pointed out that people might be put off by having to travel across the county for finals especially with the current petrol costs. Gary considers that EBU is trying to force everyone back to F2F for financial reasons. Many people do not want to go back to F2F at the present time.

#### 9.3 Green Pointed Events

There is a big move by EBU to run all on-line Green Pointed events. Herts will be opposing

this as the EBU charge is twice as much as the counties and it will deter many players from playing. This may be a battle since some county chairmen are likely to support the EBU. Margaret suggested individual bridge players could write in to complain. Paul understood that some individuals have written in but he was under the impression that their views are ignored and EBU will run its own furrow.

#### 9.4 Increased Energy Costs

Denis King wondered if there is any idea if the energy situation and energy price increases in coming months might affect the viability of bridge in all situations.

New Hertford will be holding another consultation as to whether people want to play on-line over the winter. If this happens then a retainer will need to be paid to the village hall. There is no indication at the moment that the hall will increase its price. It may be that the hall will receive some cost alleviation from the Government.

Hitchin uses a Catholic church hall which will receive no alleviation funding from the Government and it is awaiting the Catholic diocese to agree a contract for the whole of the county.

Harpenden uses three different venues, one is not changing its prices; one is putting prices up by 10% although this is the first increase for some years and the club has not heard from the other location.

#### 9.5 AGM Quorum

There were differing views on changing the quorum of 30 for an AGM. Points raised were: the number is too high; chasing round to get people to attend is a bind; Zoom more likely to increase attendance; reducing the number might distance the committee from club players; F2F means travelling; changing the quorum would have to be done at a future AGM. The issue will be discussed in committee.

Paul Littlewood thanked everyone for attending and declared the AGM closed at 2:34 pm

Geoff Cordingley, Hon. Secretary